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imagery analysis report

Probable Strategic Military-Associated Facility, Niangzi Guan, China (S)

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PROBABLE STRATEGIC MILITARY-ASSOCIATED FACILITY, NIANGZI GUAN, CHINA (S)

INTRODUCTION

1. Analysis of imagery through [] of Niangzi Guan Storage Area (BE [] an extensive, hardened, underground facility, approximately 240 nautical miles (nm) southwest of Beijing, has revealed that it may have a national-level, strategic military function. This assessment is based on the identification of the following key signature items:

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- hardening of the facilities;
- securing the facility with guardhouses and checkpoints;
- lighting the facility throughout for night operations; and
- employing camouflage and concealment techniques.

The presence of radar equipment and field artillery on recent imagery suggests that this facility has a military function and indicates that it is probably operational. This report contains one annotated map and seven annotated photographs. (S/WN)

DESCRIPTION

2. The facility, 45 nm west of Shijiazhuang and 1.6 nm southwest of Niangzi Guan, comprises at least three areas, areas A, B, and C (Figure 1). These areas, each consisting of numerous adits and tunnels, are built in separate valleys that lead to a main east-west valley served by major rail service between Shijiazhuang and Taiyuan. Areas A and B are serviced by separate and independent rail transfer points (RTP). []

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3. Area A, initially observed under construction in 1974, appeared to be externally complete by [] (Figure 2). This area contains 13 adits (at least three with clamshell doors) with various sizes of concrete pads at the entrances and 31 buildings (one is a large high-bay building with single-story additions on each side). The area is served by an all-weather concrete road that leads to an RTP with a large concrete apron. The apron and rail spur are covered by a large, curved shed roof. The RTP and five nearby adits are not visible from the ground because of vertical security screening provided by walls, other man-made barriers, and natural terrain features. On [] twenty 122mm howitzers Type 54 were observed at the RTP (Figure 3). (S/WN)

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4. Area B (Figure 4) is approximately 1 nm south-southwest of area A. This road- and rail-served, hardened, partially underground area, first observed in the midstage of construction in March 1979, is in an approximately 1-nm-long valley. Its facilities and adits are dispersed along

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both sides of a stream, crossed by at least two wide bridges that appear to be heavy-load-bearing structures. The area contains at least 23 adits/tunnel entrances [redacted] one high-bay building with a single-story addition, a weather station, and at least 12 vehicle storage/support buildings (Figures 4 and 5). Two SLOT REST radar trucks, two SLOT REST antenna trailers, and one SLOT REST-associated trailer were observed at the southern end of area B, and a SLOT REST truck and associated trailer were observed at the RTP on [redacted] (Figure 6). (S/WN)

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5. Area C, approximately 1 nm northeast of area A, was initially observed under construction in 1979 and appeared to be externally complete by [redacted] (Figure 7). This facility contains 10 concrete pad-served adits for probable explosives storage, two small revetted buildings similar to fuze storage buildings, and three support areas (two for technical purposes and one for administration and housing). (S/WN)

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Possible Associated Facilities

6. Niangzi Guan Explosives Storage Area [redacted] approximately 1 nm north of area C, may be associated with Niangzi Guan Storage facility (Figure 1). The area was first identified in 1970 and was still undergoing expansion on [redacted] (S/WN)

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7. Some 30 other installations of various functions (storage, manufacture, and logistics) are dispersed along the main valley, within 12 nm of this facility. Many of these installations were reported to have been under construction in the early 1970s, when Niangzi Guan Storage Area was originally being built. Although no direct link between Niangzi Guan Storage Area and these other facilities has been established, it is possible that some relationship may exist. (S/WN)

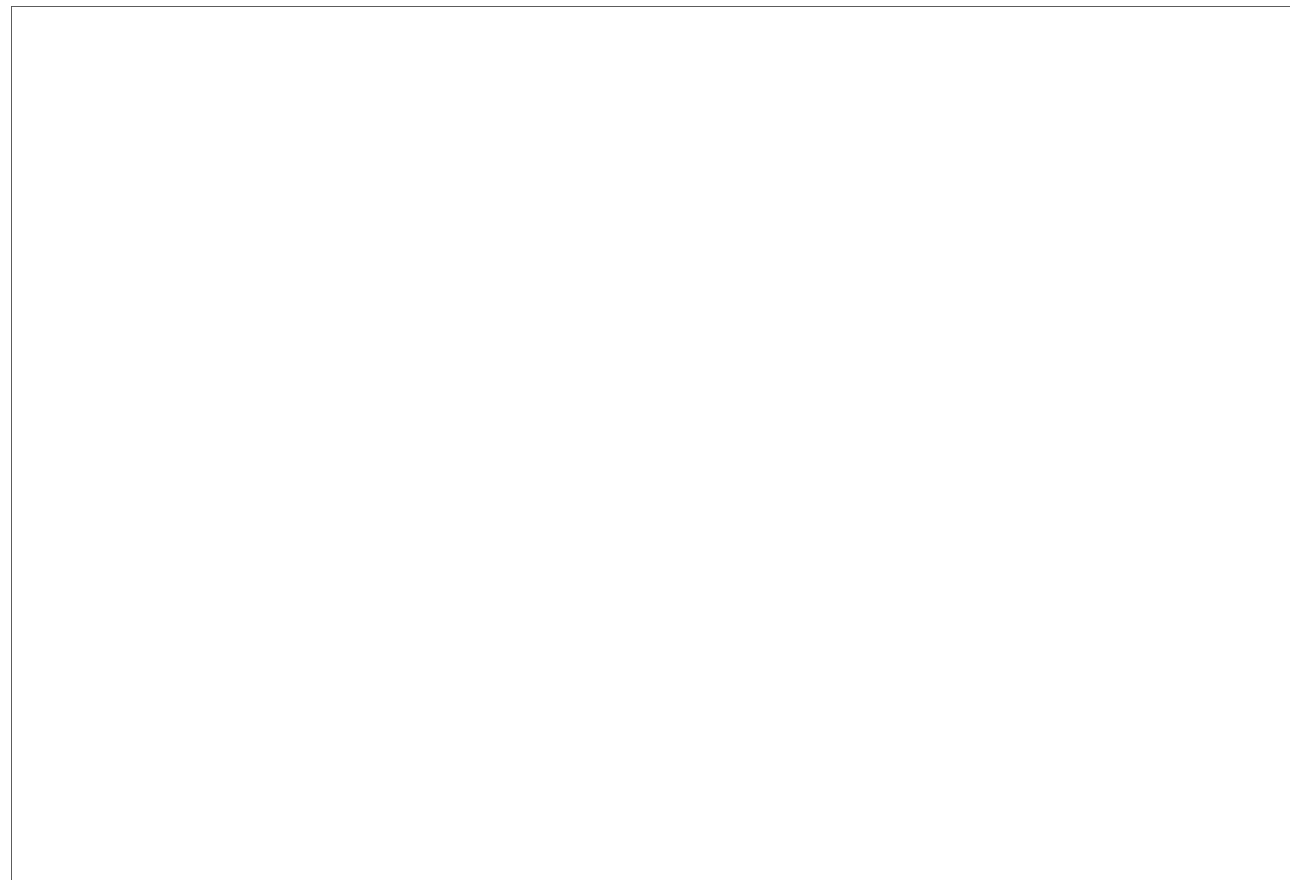
Imagery Analyst's Comments

8. Despite the existence of several key signature items, the specific purpose of the Niangzi Guan facility remains unknown. While its overall appearance resembles that of a storage facility, the increased security precautions imply that possibly sensitive materials/weapons may be handled there. The strategic importance of this facility is enhanced by the possibility that it may be linked to nearby major communications facilities in Shijiazhuang, which are linked to Beijing via a major buried trunkline. (S/WN)

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REFERENCES

IMAGERY

All applicable satellite imagery acquired from [redacted] was used in the preparation of this report. (S/WN)

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Comments and queries regarding this report are welcome. They may be directed to [redacted]
East Asian Forces Division, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC, [redacted]

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